



DR. IDA SCUDDER AND SOME OF HER JEWELS.

Three Knocks That Summoned in the Night

By MRS. E. C. CRONK

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A young girl sat in Northfield, Massachusetts. In her hand was a message which contained sufficient cause for the troubled expression on her face.

The message summoned her to come to India to see her mother, who was ill out there on the mission field. Ida Scudder did not want to go to India. She thought almost resentfully of the many members of her family who had given their lives to India.

Her splendid grandfather, Dr. John Scudder, might have been the most prominent of New York's physicians, if he had not read "The Call of Six Hundred Millions," as he waited on a patient in New York City. That call from out of the darkness and superstition and suffering laid hold of his heart and drew him out to India to give his life in self-spending ministration. His life and work had blazed the way with a trail of light through India's darkness, and never since it set the light a-shining, had there been a day when there was no Scudder in India to keep this torch burning.

One by one they had come back to America to be educated,—his children and his grandchildren. One by one the call of God and of India's awful need had drawn them back. Seven of his children and fifteen of his grandchildren had already gone back to India. Ida Scudder had been born there. Her father and mother were there now, pouring out their lives in service.

"It is enough," said Ida Scudder, as she sat in Northfield with the summons in her hand. She would go, eagerly, gladly, to be with her mother while she was sick, but when her mother was well, she would no longer bury herself in India. She would hasten back to America to live her life as other girls were living theirs.

So Ida Scudder took passage for India to see her sick mother—only to see her sick mother. She assured herself and her friends, over and over again, that there was no danger of her staying in India—the India that had already claimed more than its share of Scudders.

One night she sat in her father's house in India. As the dusk of the twilight was deepening into the darkness of the night, a knock sounded at the door. The girl answered its summons. A man stood before her. He was a high-born Mohammedan, tall, slender, white-robed. He bowed low and spoke.

"My young wife is ill,—ill to the death. Our doctors can do nothing for her. Will the gracious lady come to attend her?"

Ida Scudder knew naught of medicine.

"My father," she answered eagerly, "is a medical man. He will come to see your wife."

The Mohammedan drew himself up proudly.

"No man has ever looked upon the face of my wife. We

are high-born. I should rather a thousand times that she should die than that a man should look upon her face."

Silently he turned and went out into the darkness.

Ida Scudder sat down and thought. She was in India now. In India with this pitiful, unpitied child-wife, who might be dying even as she sat and thought of her. How long she sat, she knew not. She was startled by a second knock that sounded. Possibly the man had been softened by the sight of the agony of his little wife, and had come for her father. Eagerly she opened the door. It was not the same man who stood there. Possibly it was his messenger.

"My wife," began this man as had the other, "my wife is very sick. She is giving me much trouble. It is a pity that a wife should give her husband so much trouble. After all my pains she may die unless the *mem sahib* comes and heals her."

The girl looked at him hopefully. Surely he could not be as prejudiced as the other one.

"I am not a doctor," she explained. "My father is a medical man. He will—"

The man interrupted her with a proud uplifting of his turbaned head.

"I am a high caste man," he said. "No man dare look upon the face of my wife."

Even as he spoke he turned and disappeared in the darkness.

Ida Scudder's thoughts went with him back to the girl. Perhaps she was only a little girl. So many of them were. Perhaps she was dying even now because no man could help her and there was no woman to help. Something clutched at the heart of the American girl over there in India, and choked her throat as she sat helpless and unhelping. It was terrible that two calls should come in such rapid succession on the same night. As she shuddered at the thought and the misery of it all a third knock sounded. A third man came before her. His voice was almost eager.

"My wife," he said. "She is ill, very ill. They told me I could find help for her here—a wonderful foreign doctor who has done remarkable things."

At last there was a call for her father.

"Oh, yes, I will send my father," she answered gladly.

The man involuntarily straightened himself.

"Not a man! No man shall look upon the face of my wife. You must come."

In vain did the girl plead that her father would come. Sadly and alone the man departed as had the two other men before him. Ida Scudder sat down again. Were all the suffering child-wives in India calling to her that night? Was one of those endless processions she had read about in missionary magazines actually going to march by her door with unending, maddening continuance? Suddenly they ceased to be lifeless statistics. They stepped out of the cold dull type of the statistical reports into warm,

living flesh and blood—into flesh that was writhing in agony, into blood that was fast ebbing away.

The night passed on. The day dawned. Ida Scudder walked out into the street. As she passed a gateway she heard wailing and loud lamentation. It chilled her heart. She knew that the life of one of the child-wives had passed with the passing of the day.

She went on. At another house the beating of the musical instruments, the shrieks and the moans, told her that a second little wife was dead.

She would have turned back sick at heart but a relentless hand drew her until she stood before the rude bier bedecked with flowers, which was to carry away the poor little body of the third wife whom the skilled touch of a physician might have healed.

Unspoken accusations filled her ears though no voice sounded the words that challenged her: "If thou hadst been here, these would not have died."

That fall, among the names of those who entered the Woman's Medical College in Philadelphia, there appeared the name of Ida S. Scudder.

She had heard the call of the women and children of India: the call of her grandfather's love and of his life; the call of her father's and mother's sacrifice. Above all she heard a call which came from the lips of a Man Who hung upon a Cross. The print of thorns was upon His brow. Nail wounds were in His hands and His feet, and His side was pierced. The Cross seemed to be transplanted until it stood in India's soil and the voice of Him upon it said, not "Go ye," but "I have died for India. Come follow me."

As she has followed the Cross into India Dr. Ida Scudder has brought blessing and health and life to thousands of India's girls and women. She passes on to the girls and women in America those knocks that are summoning aid in the night. The night is dark in India and we have light. The call comes not from three only, but from three hundred and fifteen millions of India's people. They appeal, with an insistent call, for some to go, and for all to give and to pray.

One of the greatest missionary enterprises ever undertaken by the women of America is the erection and equipment of the Women's Medical College, at Vellore, India. Dr. Scudder is in India now giving herself to this work with unwithholding consecration. Government has given a large tract of land, and American women of all denominations are uniting their gifts and their prayers to answer the calls that are summoning from India's night.

How will you answer?

Dr. Anna S. Kugler's logical argument about the new Union College is: "We certainly need more doctors and we cannot expect many from America, so we must make them here. The only way to do this is to have a medical school for women. I certainly think our Boards should support this joint project to give more doctors to India."



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